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REPORT

FROM THE

Lords Committees,

APPOINTED

To inspect into the State of the Public Offices of Record in this Kingdom, and in what Manner and Place the same are now kept: Made by the Lord Bishop of *Ferns* and *Leighlin*, and agreed to by the HOUSE; On *Friday* the 30th of *November*, 1739: Which by Order of the HOUSE of LORDS, was laid before his GRACE the Lord LIEUTENANT, together with His GRACE's Answer thereunto.

Published by Authority.



DUBLIN:

Printed by GEORGE GRIERSON, Printer
to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, at the
King's Arms and Two Bibles in Essex-street.

MDCCLX.

Die Mercurii 26. Die Martij, 1740.

IT is ordered by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That the Report made by the Lords Committees. appointed to inspect into the State of the Publiek Offices of Record in this Kingdom, and in what Manner and Place the same are now kept, the 30th of November last, which by Order of this HOUSE, was laid before His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, together with His Grace's Answer thereunto, shall be forthwith Printed and Published, and that the Clerk of this House do appoint the Printing of the said Report and Answer.

En. Sterne, Cler. Parliamentor.

BY Virtue of the foregoing Order, I do appoint *George Grierson*, His Majesty's Printer, to Print the said Report and Answer, and forbid any other Person to Print the same.

En. Sterne, Cler. Parliamentor.



A
REPORT
FROM

The LORDS COMMITTEES appointed to inspect into the State of the Publick Offices of Record in this Kingdom, and in what Manner and Place the same are now kept : Made by the Lord Bishop of *Ferns* and *Leighlin*, and agreed to by the House on *Friday* the 30th of *November*, 1739 : Which by the Order of the House of LORDS, was laid before His GRACE the Lord Lieutenant, together with His GRACE's Answer thereunto.

My LORDS,

THE Lords Committees, thought They could not be any way so well inform'd, of the State of the Publick Offices, as by visiting the Principal of them.

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Their

THEIR Lordships adjourn'd first, to the Rolls Office in the *Kings-Inns*; in which are kept, the Enrolments of all Grants, and Charters of the Crown, the Original Acts of Parliament, the Pleadings and Decrees of the High-Court of *Chancery*, and several other very valuable Records. These Records they think to be of the last Consequence, both to the Property and Liberties of the Nation. They could not therefore, without the utmost Concern, see them lodged in a Place, so exposed to Accidents, which may utterly destroy them.

THE Lords Committees, found the whole Building of the *Inns*, in a decayed and ruinous Condition; and the Floors and Cielings of the Room, where the Rolls are kept, and of another Room, called the *Pleading-Office*, supported by Props. And the Clerk attending, inform'd their Lordships, That some Time ago, the Surveyor-General, or Persons employ'd by him, to examine this Part of the Building, found

found the Timber of it in many Places decayed, and the Ends of the Beams rotten, and started from the Walls; and the Whole in so dangerous a Condition, as to make these Props absolutely Necessary, to prevent the Fall of the Floors. If any of the Props should fail, or if a Defect in the Timber should have pass'd unobserved; their Lordships think, there is great Reason to apprehend, that all the Records of this Office, would be buried in Rubbish, and many of them destroyed, or irretrievably defaced.

THE Lords Committees found, several Rooms, in two Sides of the Building, inhabited by very low poor people. In these Rooms there are many Fire-places, the Hearths of which are narrow and broken, and some of them are raised above the Floor. There are also thin Deal-partitions, Straw-beds, and other combustible Stuff. If through the Carelessness or Villany of these People, a Fire should break out in any of their

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Chambers; as there is a Communication between them, and the Office where the Rolls and Pleadings are lodged, their Lordships think, they would run a manifest Hazard of being burn'd to the Ground; And this Hazard they apprehend to be the greater, because these *Inns* are reputed a privileged Place, tho' in Reality they are not; And the Inhabitants of these Rooms, are generally such, as Drunkenness, and other Vices, have made Necessitous, who fly thither for Sanctuary from a Goal.

BESIDES this Danger from within, the Lords Committees observed, this Building to be very much exposed to the Hazard of Fire, from the Houses and Yards adjoining; and their Lordships were informed, that within a few Years, two Fires have broken out very near it.

THE first happened about Twelve Years ago, in an House then inhabited by the Lady *Dunn*. The House was burn'd to the Ground, and the *Inns* were

were preserved, by blowing up a Stack of Closets, the Remains of which, shew the close Communication they had with them: But, this House having never been Re-built, there is at present no Danger from this Quarter.

THE other Fire happened last Summer. It began in *Church-street*, and burn'd some Houses, which almost joyn'd the *Inns*; And between the Fire and the Rolls Office, there was only one Room, called the Rolls Chappel, the Timber of which has a Communication with that of the Office. The Clerk attending, inform'd the Lords Committees, That the Office was thought to be at this Time in so great Danger, that the Master of the Rolls, had made all necessary Preparations, for removing the Records. But by GOD's good Providence, the Fire was extinguished, and they were a second Time preserved, as well from the Flames, as from that terrible Confusion which a

precipitate Removal of them, must necessarily have occasioned.

THE Lords Committees observed new Houses built on the same Ground, and as near the *Inns* as those lately burned: They therefore think, that the Hazard of Fire from that Quarter continues. Their Lordships also observed, that the North-side of this Building, almost joyns *Pill-Lane*, a very close Part of the City, where there are Publick Inns, and large Stacks of Hay: One of which they took Notice of, close to an old Wall of the *Inns*, and appearing above it. The bare mention of this Situation, is sufficient to point out the Danger of it.

FROM the *King's-Inns*, the Lords Committees, proceeded to inspect the other Offices of Record, which they thought to be of greatest Consequence to the Nation; And some of them, they found in the closest Parts of the City, and in Lanes so very narrow, that their Coaches could

could not get into them. This Situation, their Lordships think to be extreamly inconvenient; because in Case of a Fire, there is not Room either for Men to work, or Engines to play, to extinguish it. And all Attempts to remove the Records, would probably, for the same Reason, prove ineffectual.

THE *King's-Bench* Office is in *School-house-lane*, one of narrowest in the City of *Dublin*; the Clerk inform'd the Lords Committees, that about two Years ago, a Fire broke out very near the Office, which gave them a great Alarm: And there is now an old Cage-workhouse, within so small a Distance, as to make it's Situation very Dangerous.

IN this Office, are kept several Outlawries and Attainders; those particularly of *Papists*, on Account of the Rebellion in 1641, and 1688. If these should be burn'd, the Lords Committees fear, that the *Protestant* Possessors, would, at best, be expos'd
to

to vexatious Law Suits, to Defend and Establish their Titles to many forfeited Estates.

THE Prothonotary of the *Common-Pleas*, has his Office in *Wine-tavern-street*: An old Cage-work-house, now an Ale-house, joyns it on one Side, and the Beams of the House on the other, are lodged in the Walls of the Office. At the back there is a Yard of about Ten Feet Square, entirely surrounded with Houses; in any of which, or in the Office it self, if a Fire should break out, it would be scarce possible, to use proper Means to preserve either Houses or Records.

ANOTHER Office belonging to the same Court, that of the Keeper of the Writs and Chyrographer, is kept in *Bride-street*, in the Dwelling-house of the Officer; which, tho' somewhat better situated, than those just mentioned, the Lords Committees, do not think, to be as secure from Fire, as an Office of such Consequence to the Property of the whole Kingdom ought

ought to be: And the Clerk informed their Lordships, That by a Fire which broke out very near it some Years ago, the Office was in so much Danger, that he had all Things in Readiness, for removing the Records.

IN this Office, are the Writs of Covenants, and other Records relating to all Fines levied; And in the Prothonotary's Office, the Rolls of all common Recoveries suffered in this Kingdom: And, as Fines and common Recoveries, are the usual Support, of Settlements, and Conveyances: If either of these Offices should be burn'd, the Lords Committees are very apprehensive, That many Purchasers, for the highest Considerations, would be in Danger of losing their Estates.

THE Pleas Office of the Court of Exchequer is in *Castle-street*, where the Breadth of the Street, makes the Situation, in one Respect, less inconvenient. But Houses joyn the Office on both Sides; and on one Side, there
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are some of Cage-work near it: On which Accounts, the Lords Committees, think it too much expos'd, to Accidents from Fire.

IN this Office, and those of the *King's-Bench* and *Common-Pleas*, are the Titles, of almost all the Judgment Creditors: The Lords Committees, beg leave to observe, to Your Lordships, that, Judgments being one of the common Securities of this Kingdom, the Destruction of the Records of any one of these Offices, would leave a Multitude of Creditors entirely at the Mercy of their Debtors.

THE Office of the Chief Remembrancer of the Court of *Exchequer*, in which several Inquisitions concerning Lands which belonged to Outlaw'd and Attainted Persons, and all the Decrees, and other Proceedings in the Equity-side of that Court, are kept, is in *Kennedy's-lane*. At the Back, and on one Side, the House stands open; but on the other, it joyns the Buildings of the Lane, which are so close,

close, and the Lane is so extreamly narrow, that should a Fire break out in any one House, it would probably extend itself to them all.

THE Lords Committees, are unwilling to take up more of Your Lordships Time, with particular Remarks on other Offices. But they beg leave to inform Your Lordships, that except the Offices belonging to Parliament, the Council and Registry Offices, and some others, which are kept within the Precincts of the Castle of *Dublin*, they have not found one, the Situation of which, is in their Opinion, safe and commodious. And their Lordships see this with the more Uneasiness; because this Kingdom, has already in one Instance, felt the Evil, which there is so great Reason to fear in others. The Damage sustained by the Fire, which some Years ago consumed the Council-Office, can never be Repaired.

THE Lords Committees think it their Duty, upon this Occasion, to observe

observe to Your Lordships, That all the Offices, except those of Parliament, the Rolls, and those in the Castle of *Dublin*, are kept in private Houses, hired by the Officers; by which Means, publick Records, which concern the Property of the whole Kingdom, are lyable to be Distrained for Rent: And upon the Death of the Officers, they must for a Time be entirely in the Power of their Heirs or Executors, who, should they prove Corrupt or Negligent, might, in a few Hours, destroy a Multitude of them.

THEIR Lordships beg leave to add this short Observation; That these Offices are dispers'd thro' the several Parts of this great City, which they think to be very inconvenient, both to the Suitors and the Practitioners in the Courts.

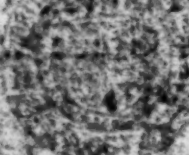
Die Veneris 14. Die Decembris, 1739.

THE Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That in Obedience to their Lordships Order of the 30th of *November* last, He attended His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, with the Report agreed to by this House, in Relation to the Publick Offices of Record, and His Grace was pleased to give this Answer,

I *Am very sensible of what Importance the Preservation of the Publick Records is to this Kingdom, and shall forthwith lay this Report before His Majesty.*

THE HON. THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FOR AN ORDER OF CONFIRMATION OF THE
TREATY OF COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND THE KINGDOM OF ITALY
SIGNED AT ROME, ITALY, ON THE 12TH DAY
OF MAY, 1904.



AND WHEREAS the said Treaty of Commerce and Navigation
between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Italy
was signed at Rome, Italy, on the 12th day of May, 1904,
and the same has been duly ratified by the President of the
United States of America, and the Senate of the United States
has confirmed the same, and the same is now in force and effect
between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Italy;

IT IS THE ORDER OF THE COURT, that the said Treaty of Commerce and Navigation
between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Italy
be and the same is hereby confirmed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Court has hereunto set its hand and the seal of the Court, at the City of Washington, this 17th day of May, 1904.

JOHN MARSHALL, Chief Justice of the United States.

By the Court:
JAMES M. McKEEVER, Clerk of the Court.

Attest:
JAMES M. McKEEVER, Clerk of the Court.

Witness my hand and the seal of the Court, at the City of Washington, this 17th day of May, 1904.

JOHN MARSHALL, Chief Justice of the United States.

By the Court:
JAMES M. McKEEVER, Clerk of the Court.

Attest:
JAMES M. McKEEVER, Clerk of the Court.